

SALAAT

IS YOUR'S CORRECT?

Moulana Fazlur Rahman Azmi

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Punctuality and correct performance of Salaat

After Imaan, Salaat is the most important principle of Islam.It is thus quite understandable why the Shariat has so greatly emphasized the importance of its correct performance, punctuality with regard to it etc. It must be clearly understood that Salaat will only be accepted if it is performed in accordance with the Sunnah. Even a slight deviation from this negates the value of Salaat. Furthermore the foundation for the success of the believers has been placed on Salaat. Those believers who are neglectful or do not perform their Salaat correctly have been warned of annihilation and destruction.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Quraan:
Safeguard your Salaat and (especially) the middle Salaat (i.e. Asr Salaat) and stand before Allah with humility.[1]

The word "Safeguard" in the above Aayat refers to among other things, performing the Salaat on its prescribed time and to be steadfast in the performance of Salaat to the extent that not a single Salaat is missed.[2]

Hafiz Ibn Kathir (R.A) explains "Safeguard" as:
"The laws and performance of Salaat should be safeguarded."

From some narrations it has been observed that some people had been neglectful and indolent in the performance of Salaat with Jamaat (congregation).It is regarding them that this Aayat was revealed. Upon the revelation of this Aayat, Rasulullah ρ admonished the Sahaba (R.A) and said: "People should refrain from staying away from the Masjid (and perform their Salaat at home) or else I will burn their homes." [3]

The Asr Salaat has been particularly stressed upon as this is the time when people are generally occupied in worldly activities. As a result, they procrastinate in its performance or they simply discard it altogether.

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[1] Surah A'l Imraan Aayat 238

[2] Tafseer Baidawi

[3] Tafseer Ibn Katheer

Let alone missing the Asr Salaat completely, strong warnings have been given with regard to the person who delays the Salaat till just before sunset. Rasulullah ρ has said; "That is the Salaat of the hypocrite. He sits waiting for the sun until it is between the horns of the Shaytaan (i.e. just before it sets). Thereafter, he goes and strikes his head four times on the ground (a reference to the extreme haste with which he performs his Salaat). He (also) does not remember Allah Ta,ala therein, but a little." [4]

However, with regard to those people who miss their Asr Salaat completely, Rasulullah ρ has said: "The person who neglects his Asr Salaat (i.e. he reads it after the specified time), it is as if he has lost his wife, children and his entire wealth. (i.e. the gravity of this can be likened to his losing his near and dear ones.)[5]

In another Hadith Rasulullah ρ is reported to have said: "The example of the person who misses a single Salaat is that of a person who loses his entire family and belongings."[6]
This means that if a person loses his wife, children and his entire wealth, the amount of grief and sorrow he will feel, should also be felt at the loss of one Salaat. He should also consider a great loss in the hereafter.

Rasulullah ρ has said: "The person who is punctual in the performance of his Salaat, (his) Salaat will be a saviour, a source of celestial light (noor) and proof for him on the day of judgement. The person who disregards it, it would not be a saviour, nor a source of celestial light (noor) or proof for him on the day of judgement. This person will be in the company of Qaroon, Firoun, Hamaan and Ubay bin Khalaf."[7]May Allah protect the entire Ummah.
In another Hadith it is mentioned that a person who totally disregards or omits his Asr Salaat, all his actions are worthless.[8]

Today, the sheer number of businessmen who, due their involvement in their businesses, read their Asr Salaat during sunset or they make

[4] Sahih Muslim Vol.1 Pg.225
[5] Sahih Bukhari Vol.1 Pg.78
[6] Fathul Bari Vol.2 Pg.30
[7] Mishkaat Pg.59
[8] Mishkaat Pg.60

qadha of it afterwards is absolutely shocking. The above Ahaadith should be remembered at such a time. It is due to this negligence that the Quraan has specifically emphasized the importance of the Asr Salaat.

Allah Ta,ala says in the Quraan: “Verily Salaat has been made compulsory on the Muslims on its prescribed time.”[9]
Therefore, to read a Salaat on any time other than the prescribed time, without a valid Shari’ excuse makes a person liable for severe punishment.

In another Aayat it is mentioned: “Destruction awaits those who are neglectful of their Salaat (and do not perform it).”[10]

These verses refer specifically to the Hypocrites. However it is disappointing to note that these examples are found in abundance amongst the Muslims.

Regarding the successful Believers, Allah Ta’ala says in the Quraan: “They are those who are punctual in the performance of their Salaat.”[11]

The importance of Salaat with Jama’at (congregation)

One cannot truly cover any discussion concerning the rights of Salaat without conveying due importance to performing Salaat with congregation. In numerous places we are commanded in the Quraan concerning Salaat. However an interesting point is the fact that Allah Ta,ala does not just command us with performing prayer but the word is ‘Iqaamah’ i.e. the establishment of prayer. `Iqaamah` does not refer to mere performance. Rather it has a very comprehensive meaning. It encompasses the scrupulous performance of Salaat in every aspect. Aside from exercising due care in the performance of the fardh, wajib and Mustahab actions of Salaat, `Iqaamah` also includes constancy and punctuality in Salaat.[12]

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[9] Surah Nisa Aayat 103
[10] Surah Ma’oon Aayat 3&4
[11] Surah Mu’miniin Aayat 9
[12] Ma’ariful Quraan Vol.1 Pg.111

Mufti Muhammed Shafi' Saheb (R.A) writes: "An eminent group of the Sahaba, Ta'abieen and the Jurists are of the opinion that Salaat with jamaat is compulsory and to omit it is a sin. In fact a group among the Sahaba negate the validity of the Salaat performed individually without a valid Shari' excuse.[13]

The Ahaadith are replete with warnings for those who deliberately (without a valid Shari' excuse) forego Salaat with jamaat. In one Hadith Rasulullah ρ is reported to have said: "By that Being who has control over my life, I intend gathering some firewood. I would then instruct somebody to call out the Azaan and perform the Salaat while I go and set fire to the homes of those people who perform their Salaat in their houses without any proper excuse."[14]

Another Hadith declares: "Had it not been for the women and children, I would have had someone perform the Salaat and instructed some of the youngsters to go and burn down their homes."[15]In yet another Hadith Rasulullah ρ is reported to have said: "The most difficult Salaats on the hypocrites are Esha and Fajr. However, had they known the reward of performing those Salaat with jamaat, they would have performed them even if they had to crawl to the Musjid."[16]

In a narration of Abu Dawood, Rasulullah ρ is to reported to have said: " He who hears the azaan but fails to go the Musjid, without a valid (Shari') excuse, the Salaat that he has performed (at home) is not accepted." Rasulullah ρ was asked: "What is a valid excuse?" He replied: "Illness or fear."[17]
The illness and fear mentioned above refers to such fear and illness that actively prevents one from joining the congregation for Salaat.

Once a blind man came to Rasulullah ρ and said: "O Rasul of Allah ρ, I have no guide. Can I perform my Salaat at home." Rasulullah ρ permitted him to do so. When the blind man turned to leave, Rasulullah ρ called him back and asked: "Can you hear the azaan (at

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[13] Ma'ariful Quraan

[14] Sahih Bukhari Vol.1 Pg.89

[15] Mishkaat Pg.97 from Musnad Ahmed

[16] Sahih Bukhari Vol.1 Pg.90

[17] Mishkaat Pg.97

home)?" He replied in the affirmative. Rasulullah ρ then said: "In that case you must attend the jamaat (regardless of your situation)."[18]

The sheer importance of jamaat is clearly highlighted in this Hadith. How can the lacksadaisical attitude which we entertain in this regard be tolerated!?

Ibn Masood ψ says; "The one who wishes to meet Allah Ta'ala as a Muslim on the day of judgement, should be punctual in the performance of his Salaat on hearing the azaan. Allah Ta'ala has prescribed the clear ways of guidance for his Rasul ρ . These Salaat too are among those ways of guidance. If you too will adopt the way of those who perform their Salaat at their homes, you will be abandoning the way of Rasul ρ, hence you would be led astray. The one who performs wudhu and leaves for the Musjid, for every step he takes he gets one reward, one of his sins are forgiven and his stages are elevated in Jannah. In the time of Rasulullah ρ only an open hypocrite would not join the jamaat. Even the sick person would be carried by two people and brought to the Musjid to perform his Salaat with jamaat.[19]

Let us read these authentic Ahaadith repeatedly and let us then reflect upon the condition of the Ummah. These Ahaadith should imbibe within us a strong will to make an all-out effort towards self-rectification as well as towards attempting to improve the condition of the Ummah, the first and immediate focus of our efforts being our families.

While the warnings are severe for neglecting Salaat with jamaat, likewise the rewards for performing Salaat with congregation are also tremendous.
The Salaat performed with jamaat is twenty seven times more superior than the Salaat performed individually.[20] Similarly, the one who performs his Esha Salaat with jamaat gets the reward for having spent half the night in ibaadat(worship). If he then performs his Fajr Salaat with jamaat, he gets the reward for spending the entire night in

[18] Sahih Muslim Vol.1 Pg.232
[19] Ibid
[20] Sahih Bukhari Vol.1 Pg.89

ibaadat.[21] A little effort will not only save one from the excruciating punishment of the hereafter but will also earn one great reward.

The Memo of Hadhrat Umar ψ

The importance accorded to Salaat by the Sahaba ψ can be ascertained from a letter of Hadhrat Umar ψ to his governors. He writes; "Among all your affairs and matters, the most important in my eyes is Salaat. He who safeguards his Salaat and is punctual in its performance, has safeguarded his Deen. On the contrary, the person who forsakes his Salaat, will neglect the (other) commandments of Deen to a greater extent."[22] From the above it becomes explicitly clear that, the person who is negligent with regard to his Salaat cannot expect to safeguard his Deen.

Correct recitation of the Quraan

Let me reiterate, guarding one's Salaat includes the proper fulfillment of the fardh, waajib, sunnah and mustahab actions. Recitation of the Quraan is also among the fundamental aspects of Salaat without which the Salaat is null and void. Having understood this it is also vitally important to know that it is compulsory to recite the Quraan with Tajweed. (i.e. proper pronunciation of the letters and observing the various rules which pertain to the recitation of the Quraan.) The Salaat will be incomplete if the Quraan is recited without observing the rules of Tajweed. Hence it is compulsory for every person to learn to recite at least those parts of the Quraan with Tajweed that he will recite in the Salaat. The person who will not endeavour to learn to recite the Quraan with Tajweed and continues to recite incorrectly will be sinful. His Salaat too will not be properly discharged. Arabic is a very delicate language. At times a slight change in the letter causes the entire meaning to change. A change in the meaning nullifies the Salaat.[23] This is the fatwa (verdict) of the Hanafi jurists of the early centuries. However the latter day Jurists have stated that the Salaat will be valid. Nevertheless, despite the verdict of the latter day Jurists, if one does not endeavor to correct his recitation, he will be sinful.

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[21] Sahih Muslim Vol.1 Pg.232

[22] Mishkaat Pg.59

[23] Shaami Pg.462&592

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (R.A) writes: "To pronounce the letters correctly to the best of one's ability as well as to take into consideration the places of stopping, so that one does not stop at the incorrect place, hence changing the meaning…; these aspects are "waajib alal ain" (compulsory on every person).[24]

Special attention should be paid to the pronunciation of the ض and ظ since it is difficult for many people to distinguish between the two letters.

Hadhrat Thanwi (R.A) writes in this regard: "The Salaat of such a person who cannot distinguish between these letters (in its pronunciation) due to lack of practice will be correct. He will be excused in this matter. However, the validity of the Salaat does not necessarily mean that a sin will not be incurred. It is compulsory to endeavour to pronounce the letters correctly.[25] What this simply means is that if one does not make an effort to learn to correctly pronounce the 'P' and 'B', one will be sinful for the incorrect recitation, even though the Salaat will be valid. Similarly it is incumbent to distinguish clearly between the ز and ذ ; س and ص ; ق and ك etc. Allamah Shaami (R.A) has stated: Should a person recite العزيم with a ز instead of العظيم with a ظ, his Salaat will be nullified.[26] Much more attention has to be paid to these aspects. One solution to the problem is the establishment of adult Tajweed classes in our Masaajid. In the Haramain in Makkah and Madinah, daily halqaas (groups) are formed and the correct recitation of the Quraan is taught. May Allah Ta,ala make this the feature of our Masaajid too. A'ameen.

Similarly, the Duaas that are recited in Salaat must be pronounced correctly. Also, one should have a basic understanding of the meaning of the Duaas and those parts of the Quraan that one recites regularly in Salaat. This will aid greatly in developing concentration and devotion in Salaat without which the Salaat is lifeless.

For the acceptance of this Salaat, it is necessary to be fully acquainted with the masa'ail (laws) of Salaat. A thorough knowledge of the Fardh, Waajib, Sunnah and Mustahab actions is also necessary. Rasulullah ρ

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[24] Fataawa Imdadia Vol.1 Pg.305
[25] Ibid
[26] Shaami Vol.1 Pg.462

said: “Perform your Salaat in the manner you observe me performing my Salaat.”[27]

The Salaat of Rasulullah ρ included the Sunnah and Mustahab acts. Hence we have to follow suit. Therefore it is necessary that every person should carefully study any authentic book that deals with the details of Salaat. Hereunder follows a brief discussion regarding certain important aspects of Salaat.

The correct method of the TAKBEER-E-TAHRIMA(Allahu Akbar) and the QIYAAM(standing posture)

- At the time of saying the Takbeer-e- tahrima, one should not lower the head. The head should be kept upright. Both the hands should be raised up to the ears.Some people only make a slight upward sign with the hands. This is contrary to the Sunnat method.[28]

- When raising the hands, the palms should face the Qiblah. Some people, instead of facing the palms towards Qiblah, point their fingers towards their ears. This is incorrect.

- When raising the hands at the time of saying Allahu Akbar, the fingers should not be completely closed together nor should they be completely spread apart. Instead, the fingers should be moderately kept in their normal position.

- After saying Allahu Akbar, fasten both hands beneath the navel without first dropping them. Some people first drop the hands to the sides and then tie it below the navel. This is also incorrect.

- The right palm should be placed on the left palm. Then grasp the wrist with the thumb and small finger and spread the remaining three fingers on the back of the left hand. This method encompasses practice on many Ahaadith.[29]

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[27] Sahih Bukhari Vol.1 Pg.88
[28] Shaami
[29] Tirmizi

- ❖ Some people leave the palm to hang down and merely place the fingers of the right hand on the left arm. This is incorrect.

- ❖ It is preferable that both the feet be kept near each other. There should be a gap of four fingers between the two feet. This method is the closest to khushoo' (humility).[30] By keeping the two feet like this, one does not need to move a lot in order to keep the two heels together when making sajdah, which is Sunnat. [31]

- ❖ One should avoid swaying and moving the body while standing in Salaat. Some Imaams sway their bodies whilst reciting Quraan in the standing posture.

- ❖ Both feet should face the Qiblah. They should not be turned away from the direction of the Qiblah. Similarly both feet should be in a straight line - not one behind the other.

- ❖ Whilst in the standing posture, the sight should be focussed at the place of sajdah. Avoid looking around or even in front of you.

- ❖ Avoid scratching as far as possible. If there is a dire need to scratch, use only one hand with minimul movements.

Rectification of the Ruku posture

- ❖ In ruku, grasp both the knees, with the fingers spread apart. Merely placing the palms on the knees is not the Sunnat method.

- ❖ The head, back and the posterior should be at one level. Do not lower the head nor raise it.

- ❖ The arms should be seperated from the sides. The arms should not be tucked into the sides nor should the arms be bent. They should be kept straight.[32]

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[30] Shaami
[31] Sahih Ibn Khuzaimah Vol.i Pg.328 & I'ila'us Sunan Vol.3 Pg.32 & Shaami Vol.1 Pg.364
[32] Shaami

- ❖ The feet should also be kept straight. Do not bend the knees.[33]

- ❖ Read سبحان ربي العظيم three times with ease. To read less than this is makrooh (detestable) It is better to read more than three times. Some Scholars regard reading the Tasbeeh thrice in ruku and sajdah as Waajib (compulsory). However the correct view is that it is Sunnat. Pronounce the complete Tasbeeh correctly. Take special care in pronouncing the ظ properly.[34]

- ❖ In ruku as well, the feet should face the Qiblah and the ankles should be parallel to each other.[35]

- ❖ In ruku, the sight should be on the feet.

Performance of Ruku, Qaumah, Sajdah and Jalsa calmly

The standing posture after ruku before going into sajdah is termed as Qaumah whilst the sitting posture between the two sajdahs is termed as Jalsah.

It is waajib (compulsory) to perform the ruku, qaumah, sajdah and jalsah calmly. To perform these postures of Salaat calmly means that after performing the ruku for instance, one should not hasten towards the sajdah until the entire body is at ease. Once the body is in this condition of calm and ease, to remain in that posture for the duration of one 'Tasbeeh' (the duration of reciting subhaanallah once) is waajib. To perform these postures in the above mentioned manner (calmly) is termed as 'Itminaan'. The omission of 'Itminaan' intentionally, necessitates the repetition of the entire Salaat, since a waajib has been omitted. However if the omission was unintentional, a sajdah-e sahw (remedial prostration) has to be made. If the sajdah-e-sahw was not performed, the Salaat is not valid and must be repeated.[36]

'Itminaan' is generally observed in ruku and sajdah, since the 'tasbeehaat'(Subha-na-rabial-azeem etc.) are recited therein. Very few

[33] Shaami Vol.1 Pg.365
[34] Shaami
[35] Ibid
[36] Shaami Vol.1 Pg.433

people do not perform these postures (ruku and sajdah) calmly. However, many people do not fulfil the condition of 'Itminaan' in Jalsah and Qaumah, since the Masnoon duaas that are to be recited in these postures are completely omitted. Sadly the 'Khawaas' (learned) as well as the 'Awaam' (general public) are guilty of this omission.

Duaas to be recited in Qaumah

Rasulullah ρ used to recite the following duaa in Qaumah:

سَمِعَ اللهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ مِلأَ السَّموَاتِ وَمِلأَ الأَرْضِ وَمِلأَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ [37]

Imaam Muslim (R.A) has recorded many similar Ahaadith narrated by Abdullah bin Abi Awfa ψ, Abu Saeed Khudri ψ and Abdullah bin Abbas ψ In fact many lengthier duaas have also been narrated.

In his Jami-us-Sahih, Imaam Tirmizi (R.A) has narrated the following duaa from Hadhrat Ali ψ:

سَمِعَ اللهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ مِلأَ السَّموَاتِ وَمِلأَ الأَرْضِ وَمِلأَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمِلأَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ [38]

In another narration of Tirmizi, it is reported that Rasulullah ρ used to recite the above mentioned duaa in the FARDH SALAAT. Imaam Tirmizi (R.A) has evaluated this Hadith as sound and authentic. The term 'FARDH' is also clearly mentioned in a narration of Abu Dawood. Hence, these duaas can also be recited in the FARDH SALAAT.[39]

Duaas to be recited in Jalsa

Rasulullah ρ used to recite the following duaa in Jalsa:

اَللّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَارْحَمْنِيْ وَعَافِنِيْ وَاهْدِنِيْ وَارْزُقْنِيْ [40]

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37 Sahih Muslim Vol.1 Pg.190

38 Tirmizi Vol. 1 Pg.61

39 Tirmizi Vol.2 Pg.180

40 Abu Dawood Vol.1 Pg.123

In a narration of Tirmizi, the word وَاجْبُرْنِيْ also appears at the end.

After narrating this Hadith in his Mustadrak, Haakim (R.A) writes: صحيح الإسناد (i.e. this Hadith has been narrated by an authentic chain of narrators).[41]

Allamah Shaami (R.A) has quoted the following regarding this Hadith: حسنه النووي وصححه الحاكم (Imaam Nawawi (R.A) has evaluated this Hadith as sound, and Haakim (R.A) has attested to its authenticity).[42]

Therefore thses duaas should be recited in Qaumah and Jalsa, since it is a Sunnah of Rasulullah ρ. The recitation of these duaas in the sunan, nawaafil and individually performed fardh salaat is also unanimously accepted to be Sunnah. It is also permissible for the Imaam to recite these duaas in the fardh salaat. In fact nowadays it will be mustahab (preferable) for the Imaam to recite these duaas due to the general shortcoming in the performance of the Qaumah and Jalsah correctly. Allamah Shaami (R.A) has also adopted this view.[43]

Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri (R.A) writes: "The duaas recited in Quamah have been reported in Sahih Bukhari and in Sahih Muslim while the duaas recited in Jalsa have been reported in the Sunan (i.e. Abu Dawood, Ibn Majah and Nisaai). According to Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal τ it is fardh (compulsory) to recite اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ once in Jalsa. I am of the opinion that the Hanafis should also recite these duaas. The ruku and sajdah are performed correctly (i.e. with I'tminaan: the body being at ease) because of the forms of zikr such as سبحان ربي العظيم – سبحان ربي الأعلى but the Qaumah and Jalsah are performed haphazardly. This is the reason of my emphasis that the duaas of Qaumah and Jalsah must also be recited.[44]
A similar statement of Allamah Kashmiri (R.A) has been mentioned in Ma'arifus Sunan. (Vol.3 Pg.68)

Qaadhi Thanaaullah Panipati (R.A) has also stated that the above mentioned duaas should be recited in Qaumah and Jalsah.[45]

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41 Mustadrak lil Haakim Vol.1 Pg. 271
42 Raddul Mukhtar Vol.1 Pg.472
43 Raddul Mukhtaar Vol.1 Pg.472
44 Faidhul bari Vol.2 Pg.309
45 Maa Laa Budda Minhu Mutarjam Pg.62

By reciting these duaas in Qaumah and Jalsah, Insha Allah our Salaat will be rectified.

Correction of Sajdah

- Whilst going into sajdah from qaumah, do not bend the chest forward. Keep it straight. Only the knees should be bent while going down. Some people heave the chest due to which an extra ruku is created. This is forbidden.[46] Until the knees have not been placed on the ground, avoid bending the top half of the body as far as possible.

- Whilst going into sajdah, first place the hands on the knees, then place the knees on the ground. Thereafter, place the hand and finally place the forehead. The nose should also touch the ground with the forehead.[47]

- In sajdah, the fingers of both the hands should be kept close together. There should be no space between the fingers.[48]

- The tips of the all the fingers should face the Qibla, including the thumb. Special care should be taken regarding it.[49]

- Perform the sajdah brazenly (openly) i.e. keep the arms seperated from the sides. The sides should be apparent. Similarly keep the thighs away from the belly. The belly should not be supported by the sides.[50]

- The forearms should not be placed on the ground. Only the palms should touch the ground. The forearm will be raised.[51]

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[46] Shaami Vol.1 Pg.334
[47] Sunan Baihaqi Vol.2 Pg.100 & Shaami
[48] Sahih Ibn Khuzaima Vol.1 Pg.324 & Shaami Vol.1 Pg.252
[49] Shaami
[50] Tirmizi & Shaami
[51] Tirmizi

- ❖ In the fardh salaat, do not spread the arms out towards the left or right to such an extent that people performing salaat on either side are inconvenienced. Spread the arms only as much as one can.

- ❖ Place the head between the hands in such a way that the tip of the thumbs are in line with the earlobe.

- ❖ In sajdah the knees should be kept close together.[52]

- ❖ The toes should be bent, facing the Qibla. To keep the toes upright, facing the ground is contrary to the sunnah. The toes should face the Qibla.[53]

- ❖ Some people face the toes in the opposite direction of the Qibla. This is also incorrect.

- ❖ Some people keep both the feet raised off the ground in sajdah. If this was done during the entire sajdah, it will nullify the Salaat.

- ❖ Sajdah should be performed in accordance to the sunnat method.

- ❖ Another sunnat of sajdah is that the heels should be kept together.[54] The way to achieve this is that both feet should be kept close together and the heels and ankles should be joined. Both feet should be kept upright with the toes facing the Qibla.

- ❖ As in ruku, it is also sunnat to read سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الأَعْلى thrice in sajdah.[55] One may read more than three times but not less than that.

The method of sitting in the Jalsah and Qa'adah postures

The importance of sitting with ease in the jalsah posture has already been highlighted. (Pg.16) Take special care of that. Furthermore read

[52] Ibn Khuzaima Vol.1 Pg.328 & I'laaus Sunan Vol.3 Pg.32
[53] Sahih Bukhari
[54] Ibn Khuzaima Vol.1 Pg.328 & I'laaus Sunan Vol.3 Pg.32
[55] Shaami

the duaa as well. By doing so this posture will be performed correctly with ease.

- Place the left foot down and sit on it, whilst keeping the right foot upright with the toes facing the Qibla.[56]

- Some people keep both feet upright and sit on their heels. Others cross their feet. This is all contrary to the sunnat.

- The method of sitting in the first and second qa'adah (sitting posture) is the same as that of the jalsah posture. Many people err in these postures also.

- The common method of placing the hands in the two qa'adahs and in jalsah is that the hands should be placed on the thighs with the fingers facing the Qibla. The fingers are not bent towards the knees, which means that the tips of the fingers are kept on the tip of the knee. [57]However, in a narration recorded in Sahih Muslim reported by Hadhrat Abdullah bin Zubair ψ, it is reported that Rasulullah ρ used to make the knee a morsel of the left hand. (i.e. He used to cup the knees). Thus some Scholars are of the opinion that the fingers of the left hand should cup the knee.[58]This is the view of Imaam Tahawi (R.A) as well.[59]

- When commencing the qa'adah, the right hand will be placed on the thighs or knees. However when reading At –Tahiyaat, one reaches the words Ash-hadu-alla-ilaaha-illallaah form a ring with the thumb and middle finger and join the small and ring finger attaching the tips of it to the palm.The index finger will then be lifted towards the Qibla. It will be lifted when reading Ash-hadu-alla-ilaaha and dropped when reading illallahu. The other fingers will remain as they are till the end of the salaat.[60]

[56] Sahih Bukhari &Shaami
[57] Shaami
[58] Sahih Muslim Vol.1 Pg.216
[59] Shaami Pg.375
[60] رفع التردد في عقد الأصابع عند التشهد لابن عابدين الشامي.

❖ The index finger will not be raised towards the sky. It will only be lifted towards the Qibla.[61]

Correction of the Salaam and Duaa

❖ Turn to the right and left to such an extent that the person at the rear can see one's cheeks.

❖ After making salaam to the right, first turn the face to the Qibla, then from here commence the left salaam. Some people commence the left salaam whilst the face is still turned towards the right. This is not correct as explained by Hadhrat Moulana Abrarul Haq Saheb of Hardoi.

❖ When making salaam to the right and left, make the intention of greeting the humans and angels.[62]

❖ At the time of making duaa, the hands should be lifted until they are in line with the chest. There should be a slight gap between the two hands. The hands should not be placed touching one another nor should one hand be placed on top of the other nor should the hands be placed on the face while making duaa.

Correct attire in Salaat

To cover the satr is a condition of salaat. Disregarding this will invalidate the salaat. In addition to this, one should take note that clothes made of silk are not worn by men. Similarly, clothes with pictures of animated objects are not permissible. Kurtas and trousers should not cover the ankles since this will render the salaat makrooh.

Once a person performed his salaat with his trousers covering his ankles. Rasulullah ρ ordered him to repeat his wudhu and salaat and admonished him by saying: "Allah Ta'ala does not accept the salaat of a person whose trousers flow below the ankles."[63]

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[61] Mufti Taqi Uthmaani

[62] Shaami

[63] Mishkaat Pg.73

It has been stated in many authentic Ahaadith that a person who lets his trouser flow below his ankles out of pride, Allah Ta'ala will not even look towards him due to anger on the day of judgement.[64] In another Hadith it is mentioned that Rasulullah ρ warned a Sahabi by saying: "Refrain from letting your trouser flow below your ankles for this is pride and Allah Ta'ala does not love proud people."[65] Yet in another Hadith it is stated: "Whatever flows below the ankles will be in the fire of hell. (i.e. this will be the fate of the one who wears such a trouser that flows below the ankles).[66]

It is clearly stated in a Hadith that a proud person will not enter Jannat. Hence extra care should be taken to ensure that no clothing is worn below the ankles. Unfortunately most people are negligent in this regard. The warning in the Ahaadith is general and pertains to wearing the clothing below the ankles in Salaat as well as outside Salaat. When one performs Salaat while dressed in the manner disliked by Allah Ta'ala, how can one expect the Salaat to be accepted. Many people fold their trousers up during Salaat but once the Salaat is over, they once again undo the folds and allow the trousers to flow below the ankles. Such people should take note that to dress in this manner is disliked by Allah Ta'ala whether one is in Salaat or outside Salaat.

Short sleeves and the Topee (headgear) in Salaat

Concerning attire in Salaat, Allah Ta'ala has commanded:

"O children of Adam (mankind), adopt dignified attire at the time of Salaat."[67]

It must be appreciated from the choice of words used in this command, that not only is covering one's body implied but implicit reference is made towards a distinctive category of attire. Since Allah Ta'ala has used the word 'zeenat' (i.e. dignified or appropriate attire) when referring to dressing for Salaat. This fact is affirmed by Mufti Shafi Saheb (R.A) who writes; "During Salaat, merely covering one's satr (that part of the body, the concealing of which is compulsory at all

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[64] Mishkaat Pg.373

[65] Mishkaat Pg.169

[66] Mishkaat Pg.373

[67] Surah A'araaf Aayat 31

times) is not sufficient but clothes of dignity (zeenat) which is befitting the sanctity of Salaat will have to be adopted. Thus for a male to perform Salaat bareheaded or with his elbows exposed (with short-sleeves) will be Makrooh (reprehensible) and a contradiction of 'zeenat'. The Shariat views performing Salaat with short-sleeves as Makrooh, whether the shirt itself is short-sleeve or one has folded the sleeves.

Likewise it would also be Makrooh to perform Salaat wearing demeaning attire that one would be ashamed to wear in public.

The ruling of Makrooh that has been attached to performing Salaat bareheaded or with short-sleeves is not only derived from the word 'zeenat' appearing in the aayat but also has been supported by the Ahaadith of Rasulullah ρ.[68]

At the time of Salaat, Hasan Basri (R.A) used to adorn himself with the most beautiful and dignified clothing and used to exclaim that Allah Ta'ala likes beauty. Therafter he used to, by way of clarification, recite the aforementioned Aayat.[69]

Wearing tight fitting clothes in Salaat

The wearing of such constricting and tight fitting attire that clearly outlines one's physical features, especially the more private parts of one's body, is completely contrary to the laws governing the concealment of the satr. It is thus quite apparent that Salaat should not be performed in such attire. In fact, one should not even appear in public in such attire.[70]

Salaat with pictures of animate objects

Performing salaat wearing such clothes upon which pictures of animate objects appear is also Makrooh.[71]

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[68] Ma'ariful Quraan Vol.3 Pg.544
[69] Durrul Mukhtaar Vol.1 Pg.599
[70] Ahsanul Fataawa Vol.3 Pg.403
[71] Shaami Vol.1 Pg.606

Clothing with inscriptions

To wear such clothes during Salaat, upon which inscriptions appear is also Makrooh. The reason being that there is a strong possibility that one's glance or the glance of a fellow Musalli may fall upon the inscriptions and he may become absorbed in them, thus distracting him from his Salaat. Once Rasulullah ρ wore a garment which was decorated and he performed Salaat with it. After the Salaat, Rasulullah ρ removed the garment and remarked that it had almost disturbed him during his Salaat. Rasulullah ρ returned it to the Sahabi ψ who gave it to him and opted for a plain garment instead. [72]

Correction of one's appearance

Allah Ta'ala loves his servants in such an appearance which is pleasing to Him. If a person shaves his beard or shortens it, or he lengthens his moustache (i.e. he allows it to overlap his lip) then how can he expect Allah Ta'ala to pay attention to him. Once two non-Muslim envoys came to Rasulullah ρ. Their beards were shaven and their moustaches were overlapping their lips. Rasulullah ρ greatly disliked even looking at them and clearly stated his aversion for their appearance.[73]

Salaat is a means of drawing the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. However when a person's appearance is in direct conflict with the Shariat, how can the mercy of Allah Ta'ala be directed towards him.

Concentration and Devotion in Salaat

Generally the aspect lacking most in our Salaat is concentration and devotion whereas the Quraan has promised success for that person who performs his Salaat with proper concentration and devotion. The remedy for this dreadful condition has been prescribed in a Hadith.

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[72] Sahih Bukhari & Sahih Muslim & Mishkaat Pg.72 &Durre MukhtaarPg.593

[73] I'faul Lihya

Rasulullah ρ is reported to have said: “Perform your Salaat as if it is a ‘farewell’ Salaat.” (i.e. as if this is the last Salaat of your life)[74]

Every person should perform his Salaat with this in mind that he might not live to perform another Salaat. He should imagine himself in the presence of Allah the Almighty who even knows the thoughts that go through his mind. He should say to himself that if I do not pay attention to Allah, then how can I expect Him to pay attention to me. I am dependant on him while He is independent of me. Hopefully this will create the desired concentration and devotion.

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (R.A) writes: “ ‘Khushoo’ (concentration) refers to tranquility. Among the requirements of Salaat is that all the limbs should be in a tranquil state. The Musalli must refrain from any unnecessary movement. He should keep his gaze at the required place and not look around or turn his head in any direction whatsoever. Neither must he straighten his hair or clothes nor should he scratch his body. Unnecessary coughing and clearing of the throat should also be avoided.

Concentration means that one should refrain from intentionally thinking of anything that is not related to the Salaat. If some stray thoughts do enter the mind unintentionally, it would not be regarded as being contrary to concentration. Concentration is within a person’s control and hence it is possible to develop and strengthen it.

An easy way to develop concentration is to ponder over every word recited. When special attention is given to every word then automatically other thoughts will vanish. This concentration should be maintained throughout the Salaat. If the above is observed, Insha Allah stray thoughts will not hinder one. However if some stray thoughts still come to mind, then fretting over them (by thinking that these dangerous thoughts have come again) in Salaat is also against concentration. Instead one should again turn one’s attention to what is being recited. Insha Allah, the stray thoughts will disappear and concentration will once again be achieved[75]

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[74] Mishkaat Pg.445

[75] An extract from Islaah-e-Qalb by Hadhrat Thanwi (R.A)

If one does not achieve the desired concentration and devotion, one should not be disillusioned and totally discard Salaat. Instead continue to endeavour to obtain the cherished goal. If the Salaat is totally forsaken due to a lack of concentration, the sin of foregoing the Fardh will also be incurred. Salaat has to be performed in all circumstances, with concentration or without it.

Shaytaan will try to mislead a person in every possible way. At times he prompts a person to think that the condition of his Salaat is so poor that it will make no difference if he does not perform it at all. However, one should not fall prey to these thoughts. The Salaat must be performed at all times even if the desired concentration and devotion is not achieved.

Nevertheless, if mistakes do happen or stray thoughts do occur, one should repent sincerely and make a firm intention to improve one's Salaat. Insha Allah, Allah Ta'ala will ease the task of performing Salaat with concentration and devotion.

The Salaat of Women

In the Shariat, although certain forms of Ibaadat (worship) are done both by men and women, yet the manner in which these forms of Ibaadat are fulfilled differ. This is especially apparent in Salaat. Many postures of the Salaat of women differ to that of men in order to maintain the very important principle of modesty and concealment. Many narrations substantiate this fact.

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Umar ψ reports that Rasulullah ρ said: "When a woman sits in Salaat, she should place the thighs (of one leg) upon the other and when she makes sajdah, she should attach her belly to her thigh so that it is as concealing as possible. For indeed Allah Ta'ala looks at her saying: 'O my angels I make you witness that I have indeed forgiven her'."[76]

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[76] Baihaqi Vol.2 Pg.223

Waail bin Hujr ψ says that Rasulullah ρ said: "O Waail, when you commence the Salaat, lift your hands in line with your ears and women should (only) lift it in line with the chest (shoulders)."[77]

In another narration, it is stated that Rasulullah ρ passed by two women who were performing Salaat. He said: "When you make sajdah, attach your body to the ground. Indeed women are not like men in this matter." (i.e. they differ in the posture of sajdah)[78]

The Imaams of all four Mazaahib (schools of thought) attest to the differences between the Salaat of men and women.

Thus, we will now discuss a few aspects pertaining exclusively to the Salaat of women.

- Before commencing the Salaat, a woman must ensure that besides her face and wrists, all other parts of her body should be concealed. Some women perform Salaat with their hair exposed, others with their ears exposed, while the forearms of others are completely open. Some wear such a thin (see-through) burqa' (head covering) that the hair can be seen through it. All this is incorrect and not permissible

- If any limb, besides the face and wrists are exposed for the duration it takes to read سبحان ربي العظيم thrice, the Salaat will be rendered null and void. If it is exposed less than that, the Salaat will be valid. However it will be makrooh and she will be sinful.

- It is best for women to perform Salaat in a place that is most concealing. Thus to perform Salaat in an inner room of the house will be better than performing it in the front room or lounge etc. Similarly performing the Salaat in the lounge will be preferred to performing it in the courtyard of the house.

- Whilst saying the Takbeer-a-Tahrima (Allahu Akbar), women will only lift their hands till the shoulders and not till the ears like men. They will lift the hands under the burqa (veil). They should not take their hands out of the burqa.

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[77] Kanzul Umaal Vol.7 Pg.307

[78] Maraasil of Imaam Abu Dawood (R.A)

- ❖ Women will put their hands on the chest by placing the palm of the right hand over the back of the left wrist. The fingers should be kept close together. Women will not adopt the method of men in placing of the hands.[79]

- ❖ Women should stand with both feet close together. There should be no gap between the two feet. In ruku also, the same position of the feet should be maintained.[80]

- ❖ First make the intention, then say Allahu Akbar. Thereafter place the hands on the chest. Then read Thanaa, A'uzu, and Bismillah after which you will commence with Surah Fateha. On completing Surah Fateha, say A'meen. After that, read Bismillah again and read a Surah. After completing the Surah, say Allahu Akbar and go into ruku.

- ❖ A woman should only bend so much in ruku that she is able to place the hands on the knees. Women will not make ruku like men by straightening the back. Their bending for ruku should be less than that of men. Place both hands on the knees while keeping the fingers closed together. Do not spread the fingers apart.[81]

- ❖ Keep the forearms close to the sides and keep the ankles together in ruku.[82]

- ❖ In ruku, women will not keep the feet completely upright, but rather they will bend the knees slightly forward.[83]

- ❖ Read سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيْمِ three or five times in ruku. Ensure that the ظ is pronounced correctly.

- ❖ After saying سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ, lift the head and stand with ease and read رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ حَمْدًا كَثِيْرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيْهِ or

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[79] Tahtawi Pg.141
[80] Bahishti Zewar & Mufti Taqi Uthmani
[81] Tahtawi Pg.141 & Bahishti Zewar
[82] Ibid
[83] Shaami & Mufti Taqi Uthmani

❖ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ مِلأَ السَّموَاتِ وَمِلأَ الأَرْضِ وَمِلأَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمِلأَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ[84]

❖ Women will make sajdah in such a way that the belly will touch the thighs and the forearms will touch the sides. The forearms will be placed on the ground.[85]

❖ Place the head between the hands in sajdah. Place the forehead and the nose on the ground. The fingers should be kept close together, facing the Qibla. The thumb should also face the Qibla.

❖ In sajdah both feet will be placed on the ground facing the right. The feet should not be kept upright. However, the toes should face the Qibla. سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الأَعْلٰى should be read three or five times.

❖ Thereafter say Allahu Akbar and sit with ease. Sit on the left posterior with both feet protruding to the right. Place the right thigh on the left thigh and the right shin on the left one.[86]

❖ Place both hands on the thighs with the fingers closed together. This is the method for women. In ruku, sajdah and qa'adah, the fingers will be kept close together without any gap in between, while the law for men is that in ruku they will keep the fingers apart and in sajdah they will keep it closed together. In all the other postures, the fingers will be kept in their natural position.

❖ In jalsah the following duaa should be read, whether performing a fardh, sunnah or nafl Salaat.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَارْحَمْنِيْ وَعَافِنِيْ وَاهْدِنِيْ وَارْزُقْنِيْ

Rasulullah ρ used to read this duaa.[87]

❖ Thereafter the second sajdah should be made in the same manner as the first sajdah was done. Thereafter stand up whilst saying Allahu Akbar. Do not take support with the hands while standing up. Then read Bismillah and Surah Fateha. Upon ending

[84] Sahih Muslim

[85] Bahishti Zewar

[86] Tahtawi Bahishti Zewar

[87] Tirmizi & Abu Dawood & Haakim

Surah Fateha, say A'ameen. Thereafter Bismillah and a Surah will be read.[88]

- ❖ Sit in the qa'adah posture after completing two raka'ats. The manner of sitting is the same as that of jalsah. Read At-Tahiyat and when reaching Ash-hadu-al laailaaha illallaahu, join the small and ring finger and and attach their tips to the palms and form a ring with the middle finger and the thumb. Lift the index finger, indicating to the oneness of Allah Ta'ala. Drop the index finger when reaching illallaahu. However the other fingers will remain as is

- ❖ If it is a Salaat of two raka'at, then maintain this posture till the end. Read the Salawaat (durood) and duaa and thereafter make salaam. If it is a Salaat of four raka'at, stand up immediately after completing the At-Tahiyaat.

- ❖ In the third and fourth raka'at also, read Bismillah before commencing Surah Fateha. If it is a Fardh Salaat, go into ruku after completing Surah Fateha. However in the Witr, Sunnat or Nafl Salaat one will read a Surah after Surah Fateha.

- ❖ After completing the final qa'adah, say the salaam while turning the head towards the right. Commence the salaam with the face in the direction of the Qibla. Complete the salaam when the face is fully turned to the right. Then bring the face back towards the Qibla and commence the second salaam from there. Turn the face towards the left as you say the second salaam. Do not commence the second salaam whilst the head is turned towards the right. Face the Qibla, then commence the second salaam. Whilst making both the salaams, make the intention of greeting the angels.

- ❖ It is Makrooh (reprehensible) for women to perform Salaat in jamaat (congregation). They should perform their Salaat individually. However if the Mahram males (i.e. those men with whom one cannot get married eg. brothers, father, grandfather etc.) are performing Salaat with jamaat in the house, a woman can join that jamaat. She will stand behind the men. She should not stand in line with the men.[89]

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[88] Behishti Zewar

[89] Mufti Taqi Uthmaani

❖ Women should read their five daily Salaat, Taraweeh and Witr Salaat individually. It is Maakrooh Tahrimi for them to perform Salaat with jamaat.[90]

Duaas to be read after the Fardh Salaat

Rasulullah ρ was once asked: "Which duaa is most readily accepted by Allah Ta'ala ." Rasulullah ρ replied: "The duaa that is made in the last portion of the night and the duaa that is made after every FARDH Salaat"[91]

Mughira bin Shu'ba ψ wrote to Muaawiya ψ that Rasulullah ρ used to read (the following) after every Fardh Salaat.[92]

لاَ إِلٰهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيْكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ اَللّٰهُمَّ لاَ مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ وَلاَ مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ وَلاَ يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ

Thauban ψ says: "When Rasulullah ρ used to complete his Salaat, he used to read أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ thrice. Thereafter he used to read[93]

اَللّٰهُمَّ أَنْتَ السَّلاَمُ وَمِنْكَ السَّلاَمُ تَبَارَكْتَ يَا ذَا الْجَلاَلِ وَالإِكْرَامِ

Ka'ab bin Ujrah ψ reports that Rasulullah ρ said: "The person who reads سُبْحَانَ اللهِ thirty three times, أَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ thirty three times and اَللهُ أَكْبَرُ thirty four times after every Fardh Salaat will never be at a loss."[94]

Muaaz bin Jabal ψ says that I once met Rasulullah ρ . He said to me: "O Muaaz, I have love for you. Thus do not forget to read (the following) after every Fardh Salaat."[95]

اَللّٰهُمَّ أَعِنِّيْ عَلٰى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

Our Responsibility

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[90] Shaami Vol.1 Pg.418 & Fataawa Rahimia Vol.1 Pg.347

[91] Tirmizi Vol.2 Pg.187

[92] Sahih Bukhari Vol.2 Pg.937

[93] Tirmizi Vol.1 Pg.40

[94] Sahih Muslim Vol.1 Pg.219

[95] Amal-υ-youm wal laylah of Ibn Sunni Pg.106

In conclusion, one must understand that besides performing Salaat regularly himself, it is incumbent upon every person to encourage his wife, children, brothers, sisters, neighbours, relatives and others to also perform their Salaat regularly.

Every Ummati is responsible for the whole of mankind. He therefore has to make an effort to the best of his ability to establish Salaat among the Ummah. Rasulullah ρ too was commanded by Allah Ta'ala: "Command your family members to perform their Salaat and you too be punctual with it."[96] Similarly another A'ayat commands: "O you who believe, save yourselves and your family from the fire."[97] Hence every person must become aware of his responsibility and make an effort to fulfil it. It is reported in a Hadith that Rasulullah ρ said: "Each one of you is a shepherd and he will be questioned regarding his flock."[98]

May Allah Ta'ala grant us and the entire Ummah the awareness of our responsibility and the ability to fulfil it A'ameen.

[96] Surah Taha A'ayat 132

[97] Surah Tahreem A'ayat 6

[98] Sahih Bukhari Vol.2 Pg.1057